



MUMBAI

American Center Bulletin

MARCH
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AMERICA'S GREEN STIMULUS BY BETHANY MILTON

It's March 2009. The United States is facing rising unemployment, decreased consumer spending, and the prospect of a prolonged economic downturn. Where does the solution lie? In bank loans, interest rate cuts, increased foreign trade? These are all traditional federal government responses to the specter of economic recession.

Modern times, however, call for modern solutions, and so American policymakers are putting their faith in a new concept, one that didn't exist even five years ago. The goal is to simultaneously tackle two of the largest challenges facing the United States: climate change and economic recession. And the tool is the promotion of "green collar" jobs.

The Colors of Collars

Green collar jobs are those jobs that minimize humankind's impact on the environment. It's a broad category. A research scientist who studies the hole in the ozone layer has a green collar job; so does a home-builder who uses recycled materials or a repair technician who maintains wind turbines.

The term "green collar" is a spoof of the longstanding American tradition of classifying jobs as either "blue collar" or "white collar." Blue collar jobs are those which generally require you to wear a uniform – a blue collar. They tend to be lower paying and in the service sector; a gas station attendant wearing a blue jumpsuit is a classic example. A white collar job is a professional one which might require you to wear a dress shirt – a white collar. These jobs tend to be higher-paying and take place in office settings.

Green is a color traditionally associated with the environmental movement, so it has been applied to all those jobs which help the movement along – both blue and white collar jobs.

The Rise of Green Jobs and the 2008 Campaign

The exact terminology of green collar employment is confusing for most Americans, because these jobs are still a very new concept. The term emerged in the early 2000s but only became prominent during the 2008 presidential race. In their party's primary race, Democratic candidates Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama came out early in support of the creation of more green collar jobs. This was the first time most Americans had heard of these jobs – or had heard

them categorized this way – but they quickly became an important part of the campaign.

While the Democratic Party is traditionally seen as more pro-environment than the Republican Party, even Republican candidate John McCain came out in support of this joint fiscal/environmental measure. For green job supporters, the Nashville, Tennessee, presidential debate was a watershed moment. Both candidates stated their support on national television for the creation of green jobs. While McCain was mum on the amount to be invested in these jobs, Obama promised a \$150 billion investment over a ten-year period to build a clean energy future.

The Benefits of Green Jobs

The most obvious benefit from the push for green collar jobs is environmental. With more people working to help the environment, it makes sense that the environment will come out a winner. However, this isn't the only reason Americans are interested in green collar jobs. Job creation – whether blue collar, white collar, or green collar – is currently a major goal for the U.S. Government. Ten thousand more green collar jobs is 10,000 more jobs, period. With an unemployment rate hovering near 7.5 percent, those jobs are sorely needed.

Green jobs are also seen as the perfect replacement for outsourced jobs. Some Americans have seen a connection between rising unemployment and increased outsourcing of U.S. jobs and services. When jobs move overseas, there is a delay in retraining laid-off workers. This can cause unemployment which can last up to a generation or more. The challenge is not only to find replacement jobs quickly, but to find replacement jobs which themselves can't be sent overseas. Green jobs are seen as a very stable source of employment. Many lower-skilled tasks simply must be completed within the United States. After all, one cannot ship a whole house to China in order to install more efficient air conditioning systems!

Green collar jobs can also be tailored to employ exactly those people affected by outsourcing. America's three big automakers – General Motors, Chrysler, and Ford – have been laying off employees for years as auto production moves overseas to countries in East Asia. One possibility is to retrain these "blue collar" workers to help produce hybrid, electric, or CNG/LNG

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(Monday through Friday)

HOLIDAYS
March 10: Id-e-Milad
March 11: Holi

A WORD FROM THE CENTER

Dear Friends,

March marks the start of spring, and in New England, where I spent my childhood, I always eagerly awaited the warming temperatures and the signs of new life in gardens and parks around my neighborhood. One of my favorite spring events when I lived in Washington, D.C., was the National Cherry Blossom Festival, usually held in late March and early April. The area around the Tidal Basin of the city turns a beautiful shade of pink, with the near-simultaneous blooming of thousands of cherry trees. The trees were a gift given in 1912 by Mayor Yukio Ozaki of Tokyo, Japan, to the city of Washington, in honor of the friendship between the United States and Japan. First Lady, Lady Bird Johnson accepted 3,800 more trees in 1965. In 1981, the gift was partially returned, when Japanese horticulturists were given cuttings from U.S. trees to replace some trees that had been destroyed by flood.

Each year, more than a million people visit Washington, D.C. during the National Cherry Blossom Festival, to admire the blossoming cherry trees and attend events that herald the beginning of spring in the nation's capital. By Mumbai's standards, one million people is a small number, but it is more than the residential population of Washington, D.C. itself. The beauty of the cherry blossom trees, and the two-week festival of arts, music, and cultural events, are a perfect time to see the city, and I look forward to seeing them again one day.

Robyn Remeika
Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer

(Continued from page 1)

cars. By growing a domestic market in nonpolluting cars, both jobs and the environment can be saved.

There can be other benefits to promoting green collar jobs as well. Van Jones is an activist who recently authored the book, *The Green Collar Economy: How One Solution Can Fix Our Two Biggest Problems*. He proposes training young people living in poverty – those living in inner cities and those left behind in school – to take on these new green collar jobs. Again, not only will the environment benefit, but these young people will gain valuable job skills and a steady source of income.

State and Federal Support for Green Jobs

The push for green jobs is coming from all levels of society. Individuals, grass-roots groups, and NGOs have come out in support. So have some labor unions, such as the Laborer's International Union of North America and the Service Employees International Union. In fact, United Steel Workers, America's largest manufacturing union, has recently teamed up with the Sierra Club, America's oldest environmental NGO, to form the Blue Green Alliance. More than six million individuals fall under this group's umbrella: a group which was formed only in 2006.

Local and state governments have been increasingly investing in renewable energy projects and green job training. Dollarwise, however, the strongest support for green collar jobs comes from the U.S.'s federal government. Currently, the U.S. Congress is debating a large stimulus

package designed to kick-start the U.S. economy. The basic idea – one that proved successful during the last major depression – is for the federal government to invest money in various projects. The jobs the government creates send more money into the economy, which in turn create more jobs, more money, and so on. The big question is what the government should be spending its money on. In the 1930s, the government invested in major public works projects, like highways, dams, and electrification. For generations, the U.S. has reaped rewards from this investment in infrastructure.

The question is, where should the money go this time around? The answer is to "green" America's infrastructure and make it more environmentally-friendly. President Obama is making a strong push to spend money on weatherizing buildings to reduce heating needs, expanding public transit lines to reduce reliance on polluting cars, and upgrading the national electrical grid to be more efficient. Projects such as these will create jobs today and a healthier planet tomorrow.

The federal government is also offering tax breaks and incentives to get people spending and to reduce their fossil fuel consumption. For instance, Congress is considering offering discounts on energy-efficient home appliances, loans for renewable energy projects, and tax breaks for families who generate their own electricity from solar panels or windmills.

One shouldn't be left with the impression, however, that this spending is free from controversy. Fiscal conservatives believe that free market forces should determine where investment goes. While they support the creation of green jobs in theory, they don't believe the government should pay for them. Rather, a growing desire of consumers for green goods and services should guide the economy in that direction. Now, Congress is debating exactly how much the federal government should intervene in the economy, and green jobs are a crucial part of that debate.

The Uncertain Results of a Green Stimulus

Where the U.S. economy is headed in the next one, five, or ten years is still fuzzy. And how a "green" stimulus package will affect it is a complete unknown. The concept of "green collar jobs" is new and the idea that they can turn around a declining economy is even newer. It's safe to say, however, that the next few years will be exciting as both Congress and the American public debate these new concepts. The stakes are high: a busy workforce and a healthy environment, or widespread unemployment and a sick planet. Can we solve both problems with one solution? Only time will tell.

Bethany Milton works at the American Consulate General, Mumbai

American Corner Programs

Ahmedabad Management Association, ATIRA Premises,
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Monday, March 9 – Film Program

Christopher Columbus – Explorer of the New World

Monday, March 16 – Film Program

Architecture to Zucchini

Friday, March 27 – Book a Month Forum

Discussion on *Fresh Customer Service* by Michael D. Brown
led by Suresh Pandit, Management Trainer

Note: All programs will begin at 6:30 p.m.

NOTES FROM THE AMERICAN LIBRARY

New Books on Environment and Energy



Green Seduction: Money, Business, and the Environment
by **Bill Streever**

University Press of Mississippi, 2007
(333.72 STR)

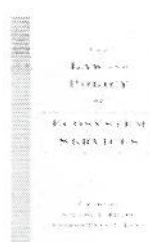
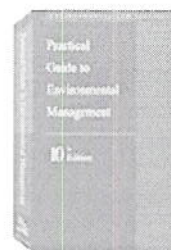
Bill Streever, formerly a research ecologist with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, takes readers on-site to nine ventures where environmental interests are succeeding economically. These include a Georgia carpet plant and the New Orleans water system.

Practical Guide to Environmental Management

by **Frank B. Friedman**

Environmental Law Institute, 2006
(344.730461 FRI)

In its tenth edition, this book includes new material on social responsibility, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act, criminal sentencing guidelines, and several other areas of environmental management.



The Law and Policy of Ecosystem Services

by **J. B. Ruhl et al**

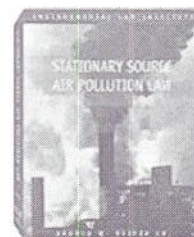
Island Press, 2007 (333.7 RUH)

This book provides a framework for thinking about ecosystem services across ecological, geographic, economic, social, and legal dimensions. It also evaluates the prospects of crafting a legal infrastructure that can help build an ecosystem service based on an economy as robust as existing economies for natural resource commodities, commercially manufactured products, and human supplied services.

Stationary Source Air Pollution Law
by **Arnold W. Reitze, Jr.**

Environmental Law Institute, 2005
(344.046342 REI)

This book describes ways to fully decipher, apply, and comply with the highly complex areas of air pollution law. It covers hazardous air pollutants, interstate air pollution controls, preconstruction and operating permits, and enforcement issues.



Note: The library subscribes to several on-line databases providing access to hundreds of peer reviewed periodicals. For more details, please contact the Information Desk.

Additional Resources on Environment and Energy A Select List of DVDs and Videos

The Environment (1995, 23 mins) (VTR 363.7 ENV)

Environmental Issues and Human Impact (2006, 22 mins)
(DVD 363.7 ENV)

Energy and Resources (2006, 21 mins) (DVD 333.79 ENE)

Environmental Action in America (1992, 29 mins) (VTR 363.7 ENV)

Life After Oil: The New Energy Alternatives (2007, 30 mins)
(DVD 333.7941 IF)

MUMBAI MONDAYS

A Discussion on
Route 66: The Great American Highway
led by Wayne Crawford

Monday, March 16
American Center Auditorium

6:00 p.m.

Wayne Crawford joined the Foreign Service in June 2005, as a management officer and is currently serving his second tour in Mumbai. Prior to this assignment, Wayne spent two years in Seoul, South Korea. Before joining the State Department, he served on active duty in the U.S. Army, assigned to the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, the 4th Infantry Division, and several other units in Germany, Colorado, Texas, Oklahoma, and South Korea. Wayne speaks German and Korean, and is joined in Mumbai by his spouse Rachel, a native of Washington, D.C.

This talk will take a look at the history, culture and mythology of America's most famous highway, covering its rise in the 1860s, its heyday and decline in the 1950s, and its recent resurrection as a tourist destination.

FILMS THIS MONTH

Friday, March 13 *March of the Penguins* (2005, color, 80 mins)

Friday, March 20 *Erin Brockovich* (2000, color, 132 mins)

American Center Auditorium

3:30 and 6:30 p.m.



Originally produced for French audiences, the American version of this fascinating documentary is narrated by Morgan Freeman and chronicles the perilous annual trek taken across the icy landscape of Antarctica by the Emperor penguin. Guided only by instinct, thousands of penguins walk single file to their breeding ground, braving harsh winds, deep waters and deadly predators.

Julia Roberts earned a Best Actress Oscar playing the feisty, trashily clothed single mother of three who takes a job as her lawyer's secretary and finds herself investigating a utility company polluting the water of a small California town. Albert Finney, Aaron Eckhart and Marg Helgenberger also star in this acclaimed effort by Steven Soderbergh.



50th Anniversary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Trip to India February 2009

The U.S. Mission in India, in partnership with the Government of India, commemorated the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Coretta Scott King's 1959 tour of India. Dr. King's son, Martin Luther King III, retraced the steps of his father's Indian pilgrimage. He was joined by prominent American civil rights leaders, including Representative John Lewis, who was co-leader of a Congressional delegation along with Representative Spencer Bachus; and former U.S. Ambassador to the UN Andrew Young. The *Living Dream* concert in Mumbai which featured jazz legend Herbie Hancock, pianist and singer George Duke, singing sensation Chaka Khan, and renowned tabla player Zakir Hussain, was the highlight of the Gandhi-King legacy celebration.



Martin Luther King III (center) at the Gateway of India paying his respects to the victims of the November 26, 2008, terrorist attacks in Mumbai on February 18, 2009.



Jazz masters George Duke, Herbie Hancock and Chaka Khan perform at the *Living Dream* concert in Mumbai on February 18, 2009.

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Admission to all American Center programs, restricted to persons over 16, will be on a first-come, first-served basis. The auditorium doors will open 30 minutes before the start of the program.